



# LAREDO & WEBB COUNTY

## AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

### POLICY COMMITTEE

#### MEETING MINUTES

July 17, 2024

LIVE WEB LINK: <http://laredotx.swagit.com/live>

PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL: Spectrum TV channel 1300

#### I. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Judge Tano E. Tijerina, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:40 PM.

#### II. CHAIRPERSON TO CALL ROLL

Graciela Briones, MPO Staff, called roll and verified a quorum existed.

#### Regular members present:

Honorable Tano E. Tijerina, Webb County Judge and LWCAMPO Chairperson

Honorable Melissa R. Cigarroa, City Councilmember, District III

Honorable Vanessa Perez, City Councilmember, District VII

Mr. Jed A. Brown, Member-At-Large

#### Regular members not present:

Honorable Dr. Victor D. Treviño, Mayor and LWCAMPO Vice-Chairperson

Honorable Ruben Gutierrez Jr., Mayor Pro-Tempore, District V

Honorable Jesse Gonzalez, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 1

Honorable John Galo, Webb County Commissioner, Pct. 3

Mr. Epigmenio "Epi" Gonzalez, P.E., TxDOT District Engineer

CM. Perez, made a motion to excuse members not present.

Second: Mr. Brown

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

#### Ex-Officio members not present:

Honorable Judith Zaffirini, State Senator, District 21

Honorable Richard Raymond, State Representative, District 42

Honorable Tracy O. King, State Representative, District 80

**LWCAMPO Staff present:**

Juan S. Mendive, LWCAMPO Director  
Graciela S. Briones, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Julio A. Niño, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Eduardo Bernal, LWCAMPO Planner III  
Adriana A. Vigil, LWCAMPO Administrative Assistant

**Others:**

Roberto Rodriguez, TxDOT  
Luis M. Villarreal, TxDOT  
Ramon Chavez, COL Engineering  
Jeffery Gonzalez, COL Traffic  
Juan C. Villarreal, COL Traffic  
Jaime Ortiz, COL Economic Development  
Guillermo Cuellar, Webb County Engineering  
Anthony Garza, Webb County Consultant  
Melissa Montemayor, WC-CL RMA/LJA Engineering  
Blasita J. Lopez, WC-CL RMA/LJA Engineering

**III. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Speakers are required to fill out witness cards, which must be submitted to MPO Staff no later than 1:45 P.M. the day of the meeting. Speakers shall identify themselves at the microphone. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. No more than three (3) persons will be allowed to speak on any side of an issue. Should there be more than three (3) people who wish to speak on a specific issue, they should select not more than three (3) representatives to speak on their behalf. The presiding officer may further limit public on the interest of order or time. Speakers may not transfer their minutes to any other speaker. Comments should be relevant to MPO business and delivered in a professional manner. No derogatory remarks shall be permitted.

**IV. ITEMS REQUIRING POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION:**

**A. Approval of the minutes for the meeting held on June 20, 2024**

CM. Perez, made a motion to approve the minutes of June 20, 2024.

Second: Mr. Brown  
For: 4  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Receive public testimony and approve Resolution No. MPO 2024-11, adopting the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).**

Judge Tijerina, asked if anyone in the audience would like to speak For or Against, adopting the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

No comments For or Against were made.

CM. Perez, made a motion to close comment period and approve Resolution No. MPO 2024-11, adopting the FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Second: CM. Cigarroa  
For: 4  
Against: 0  
Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Mendive, MPO Director, Made a brief presentation on the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to the Policy Committee. Mr. Mendive, stated what that the UPWP was a federally required work program describing the transportation planning programs and activities to be performed by the MPO in a fiscal year. He stated that the UPWP could also be amended if needed. Mr. Mendive, continued by stating that the UPWP outlines all MPOs transportation planning activities funded by Transportation Planning Funds (TPF), which consist of FHWA Planning (PL) and FTA 5303 funds. He further stated that the Tasks outlined could require more than one year to complete and the funding would carry over from one UPWP to the next. He stated that the MPO Public Participation Plan required a 20-day public review and comment period for the UPWP, and that no comments were received at that time. Once the UPWP gets approved by the Policy Committee it is submitted to TxDOT for FHWA approval and due by July 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Mendive, also went over the UPWP Budget Summary. He stated that the total estimated Transportation Planning Funds (TPF) available for FY 2025 was \$2,685,129, which consisted of \$600,000 TPF estimated to be awarded in FY 2025. He also stated that there was an estimated carryover of \$2,085,129 from FY 2024.

CM. Cigarroa, stated that Mr. Mendive, mentioned to her that the MPO was taking advantage of the federal initiative program for the climate crises for transition to clean energy for a resilient future to show the Federal Government that the MPO was looking to invest in the disadvantage communities and try to leverage those funds and find other opportunities.

Mr. Mendive, stated that it was the FHWA emphasis area and one of the areas the MPO focuses on to look for funding opportunities.

**V. REPORT(S) AND PRESENTATIONS (No action required).**

**A. Status report by the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA).**

Mr. Jed Brown, LJA Engineering, presented the following report as part of the packet:

**WC-CL RMA July 2024 Status Report to LWCAMPO**

- 1. Vision Zero Webb Laredo Safety Action Plan** – The work began in September 2023. The RMA hosted a press conference on Feb. 29, 2024, at the downtown U.S. Post office grounds to publicly launch the Safety Action Plan and reintroduce Vision Zero, including the commitment and promote a survey. The RMA Board has adopted the pledge to reach zero fatalities and serious injuries on Laredo and Webb County roadways by 2040 on February 14, 2024, followed by both the Laredo City Council and the LWCAMPO Policy Committee both in March. A public interactive information session was held on April 23, 2024, at the Joe A. Guerra Public Library and was well-attended by the public, providing comments and filling out surveys. A Stakeholder Workshop with multiple public agency staff, stakeholders, and members of the LWCAMPO Active Transportation Committee was hosted the next day in collaboration with the LWCAMPO at the City of Laredo Health Department on April 24, 2024. The bilingual survey closed out on May 31 with 574 responses total. The project team has compiled the responses and is working to incorporate the data into the report. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, the Vision Zero Webb Laredo team hosted a booth during the 2024 Bike Rodeo and Summer Safety Fair. The team is collaborating with stakeholder committees to author the first draft of the actual action plan over the summer. Furthermore, a new opportunity to highlight WC-CL RMA's work to develop the Safety Action Plan has been approved by the Texas Trails and Active Transportation 2024 statewide conference panel to be featured during a breakout session on the September annual meeting agenda. Finally, completion of the plan is anticipated for December 2024 followed by a grant application for implementation funds in early 2025.
- 2. Vallecillo Road** – The draft ROW parcel plats and strip map are ongoing and anticipated for completion in July 2024. Environmental studies are largely complete. The last section to be conducted is the noise analysis which is pending traffic volume approval from TP&P. The Traffic forecast modeling and report development is largely complete. The team submitted the traffic volume deliverable to the District in late June. The team is now preparing the specific deliverable to TP&P to be submitted in July. Upon approval, the team can complete the traffic report and the noise analysis technical report can be completed. The GEC has reviewed the drainage analysis of the project and draft report. The proposed geometry (horizontal and vertical) is complete. Utility coordination is on-going with all utility providers along the route. The draft schematic was submitted to the Laredo District on 6/28/24. The submittal of the 60% design of the Plans, Specifications and Estimate is scheduled to be provided in October 2024. The RMA is projecting a Fall 2025 Letting of the project. The RMA executed its funding agreement with the Killam Company on March 4, 2024 and is amending its Inter Local Agreement with the City of Laredo. The City of Laredo is continuing the development

of the ROW agreement with the Killam Company. As the project sponsor, the executed Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) is solely between TxDOT Laredo District and the RMA. The RMA is also awaiting the AFA Amendment from TxDOT to account for the updated funding for the project. The projected execution of the amendment to the AFA is August 2024.

3. **Vallecillo Overpass** – The WC-CL RMA will not be managing the development of the Overpass design. TxDOT Laredo District has recently informed us that they will be developing the design of this project. The WC-CL RMA stands ready to provide information from the Vallecillo Road Project to TxDOT so that the two projects' connections are well coordinated. The WC-CL RMA received the dgn files and traffic data from TxDOT to incorporate into the Vallecillo Road traffic studies, and the WC-CL RMA has prepared a construction estimate for the proposed Overpass. \$16 million has been provided by the MPO via Category 2 funds towards the cost of the overpass. The overpass has an estimated construction cost of \$47,350,390, assuming the project lets in 2027. The goal is to have the Overpass project included in the UTP adopted in August 2025.
4. **Springfield Phase IV** – Similar to Springfield Phase III, the RMA has committed up to \$1 million to the City to assist with the funding of the construction of Phase IV of the project from Hospitality Drive to Bob Bullock Loop. The sponsorship and implementation are subject to the negotiation of an Inter Local Agreement (ILA) between the City and the RMA. The RMA submitted a draft ILA to the City on 4/9/2024. The RMA has spoken to TxDOT, and TxDOT has agreed to construct the tie-in for Phase IV within their ROW along Bob Bullock at their cost. The RMA will fund the construction of the City ROW section from Hospitality Drive to TxDOT ROW. The WC-CL RMA submitted the proper paperwork to commence the development of the Advanced Funding Agreement for this project on 4/19/2024. TxDOT has begun the process of funding the Category 12 – Strategic Partnership monies to be utilized for construction on this project. The RMA and the City of Laredo met with the TxDOT Laredo District on 6/17/24 to discuss the programming of the Category 12 – Strategic Partnership monies in the upcoming UTP. As a result of this meeting TxDOT LRD has informed the WC-CL RMA that this project will be included in the draft FY 25 UTP.
5. **Concord Hills (Wormser Road/ Lomas Del Sur to Los Presidentes)** – The RMA will sponsor and lead the design and construction of a new location 1.3 mile, 2-lane minor arterial roadway extension from Los Presidentes to Wormser Road/ Lomas Del Sur within a nominal ROW width of 90' in partnership with the City. The RMA has committed \$1 million to the development of the project. The project will provide a parallel route to Cuatro Vientos and provide additional access to the new Laredo Sports Complex and the Municipal Water Park. The sponsorship and implementation are subject to the negotiation of an Inter Local Agreement (ILA) between the City and the RMA. The RMA is working with the City to finalize the construction cost estimate for the project and complete the ILA for the project. The RMA recommitted its support in funding on the project February 14, 2024, at the February Board Meeting.
6. **North Laredo and Cuatro Vientos Transportation Reinvestment Zones (TRZ)** - The

WC-CL RMA hosted a TRZ workshop on July 19, 2023, to review the TRZ study and implementation process with the City. A second workshop was conducted on 8/28/23. The RMA hosted and conducted a third workshop on 4/4/2024. The RMA is awaiting execution of the ILA with the City to commence the North Laredo TRZ Study. The City notified the WC-CL RMA on 2/13/24 that the City will move forward with drafting and distributing the ILA to the WC-CL RMA and commence the project.

7. **FM 1472 and Killam Industrial Blvd. Turn Lanes** – The RMA conducted a TDLR inspection of the project. The RMA will forward the TDLR report upon receipt to the TxDOT Laredo District. Project is pending final walk-through, and final Close-out Construction Change Order. Project is 99+% complete.
8. Other Items:
  - RMA is scheduled to conduct a Board meeting on 7/23/2024.

CM. Cigarroa, asked if the recent auto pedestrian accidents become a data point for the Safety Action Plan.

Blasita Lopez, LJA Engineering stated that there was historical data of crash analysis for that study. She also stated that it covered from 2018 to 2022 and there have been discussions about picking up the 2023 statistics. Ms. Lopez, stated that the crash incidents that CM. Cigarroa was referring to might be in the 2024 statistics.

CM. Cigarroa, stated that there had been more auto pedestrian accidents and fatalities recently. She also stated that she understood that some of the accidents that had occurred recently would not be addressed in the Safety Action Plan since there were not automotive incidents.

CM. Perez, asked if the Vallecillo overpass was fully funded.

Mr. Brown, stated that the project was not yet funded. He stated that the Policy Committee had allocated \$16 million of Category 2 funds which was a big portion towards the total of around \$40 million. Mr. Brown also stated that they were not able to get the project into the Unified Transportation Program UTP for this year and that they were planning to get it into the UTP for next year. He further stated that while the UTP for next year was adopted in August of 2025 which would be the 2026 UTP, they would be working on the design so they would not be losing time. Mr. Brown, also stated that they wanted the RMA to be a project sponsor but they learned from TxDOT the GEC (General Engineering Consultant) they use cannot design both projects side by side. He continued by stating that the project would not slow down, while they wait to add it to the 2026 UTP.

CM. Perez, asked how the project would be funded.

Mr. Brown, stated the \$16 million that had already been allocated is a portion of what would end up paying for the project and the difference (the gap) would be asked for from the state.

Mr. Brown stated that it could have potentially been funded through the Category 7 funds, but TxDOT was able to come up with the money to put into the project from the Category 2 funds. He further stated that the rest of the money could be asked to be from Category 12 funds to cover the gap difference.

CM. Perez, stated that it would be helpful to have some talking points so that everyone is on the same page about the projects, when time comes to talk to the Commissioners and Representatives in Austin and other places. She further stated that it would help not to get confused with all the projects.

Mr. Mendive, stated that the Policy Committee does have the discretion to vote on how those Category 2 funds are spent. He also stated that the Category 2 funds could only be spent on on-system projects.

CM. Perez, asked Mr. Mendive, if the Vallecillo overpass was going to be an on-system project.

Mr. Mendive, stated that since it was an overpass at I-35 it will be an on-system project.

CM. Perez, asked Mr. Mendive if the MPO could create a list of talking points on the projects and the funding.

Mr. Mendive, stated that he could provide something with an overall view of the projects and the funding.

**B. Update by the City of Laredo Engineering staff on the FM 1472/Flecha Ln. Realignment (CSJ 0922-33-076) and Calton Road Grade Separation (CSJ 0922-33-093) projects.**

Mr. Ramon Chavez, COL Engineer, gave a brief general status report on the FM 1472/Flecha Ln. realignment and Calton Road grade separation projects. Mr. Chavez, started off with stating that for the realignment of Flecha Ln/Las Cruces drive along FM. 1472 he was pleased to inform that 90% plans had been submitted to TxDOT the week before. He stated that TxDOT would be providing preliminary comments on the plans and in the next 60 days which would be for around mid-September 17 as the date to submit the 100% plans to TxDOT for final review. Mr. Chavez, also stated that the original estimated cost was for \$4,887,150.45 and there was a funding gap of \$3,637,150.45, which the City of Laredo was looking into identifying additional funding to cover the gap before letting which was estimated to be for May 2025.

CM. Perez, stated that she noticed the project was coming up for Budget. She asked if they were planning for bonding out.

Mr. Chavez, stated that as far as he knows they would be going after a State Infrastructure Bank SIB Loan to try and fund both of the funding gaps on the projects.

CM. Perez, asked Mr. Chavez how long had the projects been in the works.

Mr. Chavez, stated that both of the projects went back to 2012.

CM. Perez, stated that the long they are put off the more expensive the projects would be.

Mr. Chavez, shared a status report on the Calton Rd. grade separation and roadway widening. He stated that they would be submitting the final 100% plans to TxDOT and to Union Pacific on July 26<sup>th</sup>. He further stated that the review process from both TxDOT and Union Pacific would begin. He also stated that they continued to work on the utility's relocations. Mr. Chavez, stated that the project also had a funding gap of approximately \$2 million which the City of Laredo was already looking into finding the funds for the gaps on both projects in the next couple of months.

CM. Perez, asked if this project had also been in the works for around the same time of the previous.

Mr. Chavez, stated that both projects had been originated together.

CM. Perez, stated that there were TxDOT dollars tied into the projects that they could potentially lose if funds are not spent.

Mr. Chavez, stated that both projects were funded together back in 2012 and they had those restrictions tied into. Mr. Chavez, also stated that since the letting date was getting closer they need to make sure they get the funds to cover the funding gaps. Mr. Chavez, repeated that they would be submitting 100% plans to TxDOT and to Union Pacific and they were hoping to receive minor comments.

CM. Cigarroa, asked Mr. Chavez if he would be able to provide a map when he presents it at the City Council meeting, to envision the area.

Mr. Chavez, stated that they had the maps available and they would present them at the City Council meeting.

## **VI. DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS**

Juan Mendive, MPO Director presented the following report as part of the packet:

### **Director's Report July 17, 2024**



1. The federally required Transportation Management Area (TMA) certification on-site review has been completed. Thank you to the elected officials and stakeholders that participated. A preliminary list of commendations and recommendations have been provided to the MPO staff. Once the complete report is provided, we will update the Policy Committee.
2. TxDOT's draft Unified Transportation Program is now available for public review and comment. The comment period ends on August 5, 2024. Public involvement information and the draft UTP can be found on the following link: <https://www.txdot.gov/projects/planning/utp/utp-public-involvement.html>
3. As part of the 2025-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) development, virtual stakeholder meetings with the RMA, El Metro, and TxDOT were held this month. Additional stakeholder meetings are being scheduled.
4. Texas Transportation Commission Meetings:
  - July 30, 2024
  - August 22, 2024
  - September 26, 2024

Upcoming Texas Transportation Commission meetings and agendas can be found on the following link: <https://www.txdot.gov/about/leadership/texas-transportation-commission/meeting-dates-agendas.html>

5. Upcoming regularly scheduled MPO meetings:
  - Active Transportation Committee – July 31, 2024
  - Technical Committee – August 13, 2024
  - Policy Committee – August 21, 2024

Mr. Mendive, added that the City of Laredo had requested a Letter of Support which was needed by the week before the Policy meeting, which meant it was not going to make it to the agenda for the Committees' approval. He continued by adding that it was similar to a grant they had applied for and the Committee had approved that letter in the past, so they provided a similar letter to that and the Chairman, Judge Tijerina signed it and it was provided to the City of Laredo.

CM. Cigarroa, asked if they would need to ratify that Letter of Support.

Mr. Mendive, stated that they did not need to rarify it. He stated that it was just stated to make the Committee members aware of it.

## **VII. COMMUNICATIONS**

Judge Tijerina, asked the Policy members if there was anything they would like to comment on.

There were no comments.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Judge Tijerina, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:04 PM.


Second: CM. Perez

For: 4

Against: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion carried unanimously.



Juan S. Mendive, AICP  
LWCAMPO Director



Webb County Judge Tano E. Tijerina  
LWCAMPO Chairperson